



Abandoned Well Plugging Grant Application Criteria and Instructions for Form 780-2162

This fact sheet provides an overview of the Abandoned Well Plugging Grant program administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Water Protection Program, Public Drinking Water Branch. Part 1 of this document describes the program's purpose and objectives, specific requirements, limitations and the conditions for applicant and project eligibility. Part 2 provides step-by-step instructions for completing the application for Form 780-2162.

Purpose

The number of abandoned drinking water wells in Missouri is estimated to be as high as 500,000. Abandoned water wells have many risks associated with them. Chief among these risks is the threat posed to human health. In addition to the physical hazards these often unrecognized structures can pose to children and adults, the threat of contamination to underlying groundwater reservoirs from abandoned wells is a significant concern to communities across Missouri. These structures can provide a direct conduit for contamination to enter into a groundwater reservoir, which, once contaminated, can be costly to clean up. In worst case scenarios, a groundwater reservoir may need to be abandoned as a source of raw drinking water due to excessive contamination.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act, §1452(k), authorizes the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to allocate a portion of the Missouri Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to promote source water protection awareness, education and implementation. Safeguarding our groundwater reserves by properly plugging abandoned water wells is one common sense step that can be taken by communities to increase protection to these vital resources. More than 1,100 public water systems in Missouri, serving approximately 1.7 million citizens, use groundwater as the sole or primary source of raw drinking water for their community.

Objectives

1. Educate and inform the citizenry of Missouri about the benefits of protecting our groundwater reserves through source water protection planning and by promoting community-level action to decrease the risk of contamination to groundwater from abandoned water wells.
2. Provide financial assistance to primary community public water systems that use groundwater to identify and properly plug abandoned drinking water wells in accordance with all state and federal regulations and requirements.
3. Promote awareness and participation with the department's voluntary Source Water Protection Program.

Eligible Costs

Actual costs of plugging abandoned public, domestic and multiple family wells are reimbursable through this grant program. Public outreach, incentives and administrative costs for approved projects are also eligible for funding pending department approval.

- Reimbursement for plugging public drinking water wells is limited to 75 percent of the total cost per well or a maximum of \$10,000 per well, whichever amount is less.
- Reimbursement for plugging domestic or multiple family wells is variable and depends on the type of reimbursement sought by the grant recipient.
 - If the grant recipient elects to receive a one-time reimbursement following completion of the project, the reimbursement rate is set to an average of \$1,000 for multiple family and domestic wells. For example, if two wells, for example, are plugged at a cost of \$1,200 and \$800 each, the grant recipient is eligible for up to \$2,000 total reimbursement.
 - If the grant recipient prefers not to advance funds for costs associated with the plugging of multiple wells, they may elect to receive a maximum reimbursement of \$1,000 incrementally for each well plugged upon closure of each well. Incremental reimbursement is only available after the Abandonment Registration Record form is filed with the department's Division of Geology and Land Survey, a copy of which must be provided to the department's Public Drinking Water Branch. Additional wells may be plugged, with additional reimbursement payable in like fashion for each, following completion of the plugging work. This option is provided for grant recipients having limited funding available to plug multiple abandoned wells prior to reimbursement of eligible costs.
- Reimbursement for information brochures, newsletters, or similar materials for public outreach efforts is also eligible through this program. One copy of each document must be provided to the department along with related invoices prior to reimbursement of funds. Any printed materials funded through this program must credit the department appropriately as the partial or sole source of funds used to produce the materials.

Applicant Eligibility

Primary community public water systems that use groundwater are eligible to apply for reimbursement funding through this program. Eligible public water systems must be in compliance with all state and federal drinking water regulations or formally working toward compliance with the department. Only projects that address abandoned drinking water wells in Missouri are eligible for reimbursement funds.

Project Eligibility

Submitted projects are eligible for funding if they achieve the goal of increasing awareness of the threats that abandoned water wells can pose to a community's drinking water supply or if they result in the identification and proper decommissioning of abandoned water wells in the project area. Eligible projects may include procedures to identify and locate abandoned wells in the community, in addition to actual proper plugging of known abandoned drinking water wells.

Specific Requirements

All well plugging work must be performed by a permitted well driller or pump installer licensed to operate in Missouri in accordance with the Missouri Well Construction Rules described in 10 CSR 23-3.110.

- Domestic and multiple family water wells in Missouri may legally be plugged by the well owner provided he owner follows all state regulations and requirements for proper plugging; however, funds provided through this grant program can only be reimbursed to the grant recipient if the work is performed by a certified well driller or pump installer licensed to work in Missouri.
- All necessary documentation, such as corresponding well Abandonment Registration Record forms, must be filed with the department's Division of Geology and Land Survey prior to reimbursement of awarded funds.

Grant recipients must agree to submit an initial wellhead or source water protection plan to the department (for review) upon completion of the project if the public water system does not already have an endorsed plan on file. Grant recipients that have a protection plan with expired endorsement must agree to seek renewal of their endorsement following completion of the project.

- Subsequent approval and endorsement of the submitted plan is independent of the requirements of this grant program.
- Assistance with developing an initial plan or renewing an existing plan is available upon request from the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch.

Upon completion of the project, a brief final report must be submitted to the department that summarizes the outcomes and benefits of the completed project.

Applicants may offer nominal financial incentives in the form of well "finder's fees" to private citizens that report an abandoned well to the project team.

- Incentives can be a one-time cash payout (not to exceed \$50 per citizen) or take the form of a water bill rebate.
- Finder's fee incentives are only reimbursable if they are offered to private citizens that report an abandoned well they own.
- All incentives offered through the project must be approved by the department to qualify for reimbursement.

Matching funds are not required for applications to be considered for funding.

Project applications must include a map of the project area and the locations of identified abandoned water wells to be considered for funding. Assistance to meet this project requirement is available from the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch, if needed.

Applications may be submitted to the department at any time during the state fiscal year, which extends from July 1 through June 30. Eligible projects and applications will be considered for funding on a first-come, first-served basis as allocated funds remain.

- All applications are date stamped upon receipt by the department.
- If allocated funds are fully used prior to receipt of an eligible project application, the application may be retained and considered for funding through a later grant offering.

Grant recipients and subcontractors may be required to comply with provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act as described in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR; 29 CFR 5.5). Grant recipients are responsible for maintaining complete records to document compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act as appropriate. Written documentation must be submitted to the department regarding projects not bound by requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act.

Limitations

Awards are limited to a maximum of \$10,000.

The following items are not eligible for funding but may be included as in-kind match:

- Equipment purchases that cost \$5,000 or more.
- Personnel costs (public water system staff time).
- Land acquisition costs or conservation easements.
- Travel or refreshment costs.
- Infrastructure improvements to a water system's distribution network.
- Storage system, or treatment processes.
- Routine operation and maintenance of the water system.

Project periods are limited to one year in length. The effective project period will begin the date a financial assistance agreement with the applicant is signed by the department.

Only costs incurred during the effective project period are eligible for reimbursement.

Public outreach efforts to identify abandoned wells in the project area are eligible for funding. It is acceptable to provide an initial estimate of the number of wells to be plugged; however, if additional wells are identified for plugging that were not included within the original financial assistance agreement, the grant recipient must sign an amended financial assistance agreement with the department to receive reimbursement for any additional costs.

- Amendments to the financial assistance agreement must be approved by the department during the effective project period.
- Expenses incurred prior to department approval are not reimbursable under any circumstances.
- The maximum total reimbursement for any project cannot exceed \$10,000 as an initial or amended grant award.

Reimbursement funds shall only be provided for the decommissioning and plugging of drinking water wells that are deemed "abandoned." According to the revised statutes of Missouri (RSMo 256.603), a water well is deemed abandoned when it is in such a state of disrepair that continued use for obtaining groundwater is impractical and the well has not been in use for a period of two years or more.

- Reimbursement funds cannot be used to convert an active well (regardless of whether the well is currently in use) to abandoned status.
- Drinking water wells still connected to a distribution network, whether in use or not, are not considered abandoned within the context of this program.
- Reimbursement funds cannot be provided for labor or other costs incurred to disconnect an existing well from a distribution network, whether public or private.

Demolition costs or other expenses associated with the removal of system infrastructure (such as well houses) are not reimbursable.

Older abandoned wells frequently do not have adequate records to develop a reasonable estimate of the cost required to decommission the well. Tests or methods used to determine an abandoned well's total depth and casing depth may be funded through this program provided the results are used to properly plug and decommission the well during the project.

Remediation, plugging, or decommissioning of cisterns is not an eligible project component through this program.

The department reserves the right to weigh all applications on the quality of the proposed project and readiness to proceed in order to effectively use available funds. Proposed activities may be prioritized, expanded, or removed upon negotiation with the applicant.

Glossary of Selected Terms

Abandoned Well - A well shall be deemed abandoned that is in such a state of disrepair continued use for the purpose of thermal recovery or obtaining groundwater is impractical and has not been in use for a period of two years or more.(RSMo 256.603).

Community Public Water Supply Well - A well that serves 15 or more service connections or regularly serves 25 or more people on a year-round basis (10 CSR 23-1).

Community Water System - A public water system that serves at least 15 service connections and is operated on a year-round basis or regularly serves at least 25 residents on a year-round basis (10 CSR 60-2).

Domestic Well - A private water supply well constructed to meet minimum standards and is equipped with a pump that does not have the capacity to produce more than 70 gallons of water per minute and services three or less service connections. A private domestic water supply well that produces less than 70 gallons of water per minute regardless of the use is a domestic well (10 CSR 23-1).

Multiple Family Well - A private water supply well constructed for the purpose of serving more than three dwellings, but having less than 15 service connections and serving less than 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year (10 CSR 23-1).

Noncommunity Public Water Supply Well - A well that serves 15 or more service connections or an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days of the year (10 CSR 23-1).

Permitted Well Driller - Any person who holds a permit issued pursuant to the provisions of sections 256.600 to 256.640 (RSMo 256.603).

Primary Public Water System - A public water system that obtains its source of drinking water directly from a well, infiltration gallery, lake, reservoir, river, spring, or stream (10 CSR 60-2).

Public Water System - A system for the provision to the public of piped water for human consumption, if the system has at least 15 service connections or regularly serves an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. The system includes any collection, treatment, storage, or distribution facilities used in connection with the system. A public water system is either a community water system or a noncommunity water system (10 CSR 60-2).

Well Owner - Any person or corporation who is the party responsible for having a well drilled and whose name appears on the well registration or certification form (RSMo 256.603).

Grant Processing Overview

Upon receipt of a submitted application, the proposed project is reviewed by the department for completeness and accuracy. Review of project applications typically takes one month from the time the application is received and date stamped by the department. Applicants are notified following this review period whether the submitted project has been selected for funding or if revisions to the proposed project are necessary to qualify for a reimbursement grant.

The processing of awards for selected projects will begin following the internal review period. Grant recipients should expect to receive an award package from the department approximately two months from the time the application is initially received. This package includes the following documents:

Two Financial Assistance Agreements (signed by the department)

- One copy must be signed and returned to the department
- One copy must be kept on file by the award recipient

Scope of Work Document

- This document describes the pertinent details of the project and the agreed upon financial conditions of the grant.

Suspension/Debarment Form

- This form must be completed and returned to the department prior to the recipient receiving reimbursement funds.

Approved expenses are reimbursed following receipt of relevant invoices and a formal letter of request for reimbursement from the primary applicant. Expenses related to well decommissioning work can only be reimbursed after a copy of the approved Abandonment Registration Record form, which must be filed with the department's Division of Geology and Land Survey, is provided to the department's Water Protection Program Public Drinking Water Branch. Under no circumstances will unapproved expenses be reimbursed by the department. This includes any expenses incurred prior to or following the agreed upon effective project period. The time period between receipt of invoices and reimbursement is typically less than one month; however, this time can extend longer if complications arise during review of submitted invoices.

All applicants must have a Vendor Input Form on file with the State of Missouri to receive reimbursement. Please contact the Source Water Protection Coordinator if you have any questions regarding this form (contact information provided in Part 2, Section 6 of this document).

Application Instructions for Form 780-2162

All applications must be submitted to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Water Protection Program, Public Drinking Water Branch using Form 780-2162. This form is available electronically at www.dnr.mo.gov/forms/780-2162-f.pdf or a paper copy is available by contacting the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch at 573-751-5331. The following information is intended to provide a step-by-step guide for applicants to follow to complete Form 780-2162.

Section 1 - Applicant Information

- In the space provided, enter information about the primary community public water system sponsoring the project proposal. Include the system name, state assigned identification code and available office contact information.
- Include the applying organization's federal Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Number System, or DUNS, number. This nine-digit code is required for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to distribute federally derived funds. This code is available by calling 866-705-5711 or online at www.fedgov.dnb.com/webform.
- Indicate the primary U. S. Congressional District, the Missouri Senate District and the Missouri House District within which the applicant operates. This information is available from the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch upon request.

Section 2 - Project Management Information

Indicate the title of the proposed project and the project manager's name, title and contact information in the spaces provided. Indicate the anticipated project period in the appropriate field

Note: the effective project period will extend one year from the date financial assistance agreement is signed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

In the check box provided, indicate whether the project is to be reimbursed as a one-time payment following completion of the project or if the grant recipient intends to receive incremental reimbursement upon the closure of one domestic or multiple family well to be used toward the closure of additional domestic or multiple family wells (please refer to page 2 of this guidance under "Eligible Costs" for additional information regarding incremental reimbursements).

Section 3 - Detailed Project Description

This section of the grant application form is devoted to the details of the proposed project and replaces the need for providing a report-style description of the proposal. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

- Provide a brief summary overview of the project in the space provided.
- Describe the public outreach efforts or other methods to be employed to locate abandoned wells within the project area.
- Indicate the status of the applying public water system's Source Water Protection or Wellhead Protection Plan by checking the appropriate box.
 - Public water systems that do not have a department-endorsed source water protection or wellhead protection plan must agree to submit a preliminary plan to the department for review upon completion of the selected project. Subsequent endorsement or approval of the submitted initial plan is independent of the requirements of this grant program.
 - Public water systems that have an existing source water protection or wellhead protection plan with an expired endorsement from the department must agree to renew their plan and renew endorsement from the department (upon completion of the project) to receive funds through this program.

Section 4 - Project Budget

Information regarding the project budget should be included in this section of the application form. Itemize the projected budget costs using the spreadsheet provided (additional sheets may be added if necessary). The examples provided below are not all-inclusive and certain budget items may fit equally well in another budget class. Please contact the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch if you have any questions regarding the proposed project budget.

- Public water system staff time is not reimbursable but can be included within the budget as in-kind matching funds.
- Materials and supplies can include items such as brochures, mailers, printing costs, or other materials needed to complete an eligible project component. Individual items that cost \$5,000 or more are considered equipment and cannot be reimbursed through this program.
- Contractual and implementation costs can include any contracted work that is used to accomplish eligible project activities. Costs associated with implementation of project tasks may also be included within this portion of the itemized budget.
- Nominal incentives to private landowners may be fundable through this program in the form of water bill rebates or one-time abandoned well "finder's fees" for landowners that voluntarily agree to have privately owned domestic water wells plugged. Individual incentive payments shall not exceed \$50. All incentives must be pre-approved by the department.
- In the space provided record the total budget for requested grant funds, offered matching funds and the grand project total of requested and matching funds. Indicate the match percentage of the total grant project budget in the appropriate field.

Section 5 - Signatures

The primary project sponsor must have an authorized organization representative sign and date the appropriate fields in Section 5. Include the state-assigned public water system ID code.

Section 6 - Instructions for Submitting Grant Application

Please mail the completed application to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Water Protection Program, Public Drinking Water Branch, ATTN: Source Water Protection Coordinator, PO Box 176, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0176. Fax submittals shall not be accepted. A simple map of the project area must be provided to the department for a project to be considered for funding. Please contact the Water Protection Program's Public Drinking Water Branch at 573-751-5331 if you have any questions regarding required documentation or options for providing these materials to the department.

For More Information

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Water Protection Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
800-361-4827 or 573-751-1300
573-526-1146 FAX
www.dnr.mo.gov/env/wpp